

Hunting - the call for justice

A year ago on the 9th of February, an 18 year old hunt saboteur was killed whilst trying to prevent a van of beagles from being driven to a hunt location: he was crushed between the van and the trailer in an attempt to leap off to safety (the driver was doing 40 mph around twisting country lanes hoping to throw off the saboteurs).... Susan Stoward reports.

Mike Hill became the first ever hunt saboteur to be killed in Britain. Mike had worked and lived there as a volunteer for 9 months prior to his death, looking after abandoned puppies. I spoke to Lesley Turleton, a colleague of Mike's who also works at the centre. She spoke of their utter shock at the tragedy. Mike was a gentle and peaceful man, who had his whole life ahead of him. Lesley said that just before his death the volunteers at the Rescue Centre had been discussing the escalation in violence towards hunt supporters. They agreed that Mike's last hunt, before there was a fatality, Lesley said it was tragic that Mike was to fall victim to his own fears. What has upset Lesley and her colleagues at the Rescue Centre most, has been the aftermath of Mike's death - the Centre has been continually harassed by phonecalls from what Lesley refers to as "the other side". She said of the calls, "They were abusive, distressing and out of order. Those people must be really sick."

As if Mike's family, friends and colleagues have not suffered enough on top of this apparent miscarriage of justice, the Freshfields Animal Rescue Centre in Liverpool where Mike worked has since been the target of the most foul and distressing hate calls from hunters at all hours of the day and night.

The Freshfields Animal Rescue

Centre is a small struggling charity caring for over 200 animals. Mike still worked and lived there as a volunteer for 9 months prior to his death, looking after abandoned puppies. I spoke to Lesley Turleton, a colleague of Mike's who also works at the centre. She spoke of their utter shock at the tragedy. Mike was a gentle and peaceful man, who had his whole life ahead of him. Lesley said that just before his death the volunteers at the Rescue Centre had been discussing the escalation in violence towards hunt supporters. They agreed that Mike's last hunt, before there was a fatality, Lesley said it was tragic that Mike was to fall victim to his own fears. What has upset Lesley and her colleagues at the Rescue Centre most, has been the aftermath of Mike's death - the Centre has been continually harassed by phonecalls from what Lesley refers to as "the other side". She said of the calls, "They were abusive, distressing and out of order. Those people must be really sick."

Even one year following the event they are still wary of them. I could easily speak to Lesley until she had checked out that I was genuine. She later told me that many of the so-called journalists who contacted her were in fact the members of "the other side". Lesley recalled how "Some of the things they said were unspeakable. Unrepeatable."

Even the Hunt members seem to think that they have something to hide. Alan Summersgill, the man who caused Mike's death, (who was driving the van from which he fell to his death) is untraceable. He has apparently gone into hiding, in fear Lesley believes, that he will be

Greening the Union

After a conversation with a member of your group today, I agreed to send a paper outlining exactly what the Union is doing with regards to being more environmentally friendly.

"All offices have a 'green bin' into which all waste paper is put and is taken away every week to be recycled."
The paper used in the photocopier is recycled. There is a skip for aluminium cans outside the Union front door.

"We have converted to milk bottles as far as possible. Unfortunately, we have to keep the half pint milk cartons in the shop and the bars because people complain about not being able to buy a full bottle when you only want a small one."

"We attempted to convert the minibus to unleaded but it is not compatible with a catalytic converter. This will be borne in mind when we eventually buy another. Whenever possible the train is to be used instead of aeroplane. Flight may only be used if there is no feasible rail link."

"We now use polythene CFC free cups instead of plastic ones."

"All brown envelopes are made from recycled

waste paper."

"All minor publications are printed on recycled paper have been unsuccessful.

"We use electronic mailing agents."

"We are starting a scheme whereby users of the shop will be invited to return their poly bags to the shop. In addition to this, the bags are only given if recycled paper is used to wrap the item.

"Several days (probably one per term) are being organised for the picking of old newspapers."

"Catering plates are being reduced in size to fit on the paper. After each course, the white

papers are returned to the front of the table and I take them for my recycling bin."

If you can think of anything that we are doing wrong, please do not hesitate to let us know. Good luck in your attempts with the University. If we can be of any assistance, again let me know."

Allison Brotts, VPI

accused of murder and brought to justice. It is generally believed that the police have turned a blind eye to Mike's death; whilst quick to arrest hunt saboteurs for any minor incident, they are much slower to take action against the hunters themselves - who have to be the real criminals.

There are over 200 active foxhun-

fox enjoys the chase" (so would you enjoy being pursued by a pack of bloodthirsty hounds only to be torn to pieces by them) to "Hunting is a great tradition" (an upper class tradition that has no place in contemporary society).

It is clear that the real cruelty of foxhunting is in the pursuit, the torture, confusion and trauma inflicted on the victim. Yet still the hunt members justify their 'sport'. And the story doesn't end there: according to the League Against Cruel Sports, "Hunting is riddled with officials, members and supporters who have been convicted of cruelty to animals."

As many hunters suggested, "hunting may be in the blood" but it should not be paid for by the blood of the thousands of foxes that are slaughtered annually, and certainly not with the life of an 18 year old peaceful protestor. I spoke to the secretary of the Cheshire Hunt, a Mr J McMahen, and when I asked him if the hunt had any trouble with hunt saboteurs, he became very vague, and replied, I quote, "No. No problems that I can recall."

The Freshfields Animal Rescue Centre has set up a memorial fund that has paid for a new sanctuary at the Centre. Also, in commemoration of Mike's death, there was a Week of Action against the Cheshire Hunt and demands were made to the right of Ball. A wreath was laid on the spot where Mike died. When I asked what he replied, that he (Mike) is not forgotten. Secondly, he would have wanted to pursue the truth and gain justice for his death. Lastly he would have demanded that the Cheshire Hunt be stopped completely, never again allowed to hunt. Nothing less will ever compensate for his killing."

"Not to hurt our humble brethren is our religious duty to them, but there is not enough. We have a higher mission - to be of service to them whenever they require it."

SJ Francis of Assisi
Hunt Saboteurs Society.

Susan Stoward

Useful Addresses

Hunt Saboteurs Association
PO Box 1, Carlton
Nottingham NG4 2JY

Mike Hill Memorial Fund
Freshfields Animal Rescue Centre
Eastgate Farm
Eastgate
LIVERPOOL L29 3EH

League Against Cruel Sports
Sparling House
83-87 Union Street
London SE1 1SG

Clydeside Hunt Saboteurs
PO Box 180
Glasgow G4 9AB

Advocates for Animals
10 Queenberry Street
Edinburgh EH2 4PG

Animal Concern (Scotland)
62 Old Dunbar Road
Glasgow G3 8RE

LYNX
PO Box 300
Nottingham
NG1 3HN

Vegetarian Society (Scotland)
c/o E Park
243 Merton Road
Paisley PA3 4HU

13 March 1992

Dear Clydeside Hunt Sabs,

I am sending you a copy of the article that I wrote concerning the Mike Hill incident, I hope that you agree it is important to publicize his death in the hope that more people will become involved in relevant organisations to stop hunting practises and perhaps donate to his memorial fund.

I hope you find the piece interesting to read,

Yours sincerely,



Suzan Stonard...FEATURES EDITOR